

Academic Program Review

Office of the Provost

Self-Study Outline

I. Executive Summary (1 page overview of Self-Study key takeaways)

II. Department Overview and Governance

- a. History, Mission and Vision of the Department
- b. Current Structure
 - i. Current Faculty Headcount and Trends
 - ii. Department Governance
 - iii. Staff Structure and Departmental Support

III. Brief Overview of Educational Programs

- a. Undergraduate (as applicable)
 - i. Curriculum/Program Learning Outcomes
 - ii. Strengths/Opportunity areas + any notes on anticipated changes
- b. Graduate (as applicable)
 - i. Curriculum/Program Learning Outcomes
 - ii. Strengths/Opportunity areas + any notes on anticipated changes

IV. Research Priorities

- a. Current Research Focus Areas of Department
 - i. Strengths
 - ii. Opportunity areas
 - iii. Any anticipated changes to the field in these sub-areas

V. Collaborations

- a. Internal to Northwestern
- b. External to Northwestern

VI. In-Depth Key Issues Analysis

- a. Further reflection on each Key Issue identified
- b. Brief response to Key Issues noted in last review

VII. Notes on Preparation of Self-Study

VIII. Appendices (as needed)

Detailed Overview of Self-Study Sections

Please note, the above outline is a **suggested** outline only - units should feel free to customize their Self-Study as needed. We encourage units to leverage the data profile and faculty survey results provided by the Office of the Provost when writing the Self-Study. The APR team is also happy to provide a sample Self-Study to Chairs, by request.

Executive Summary: The Department should open the Self-Study with a 1–2-page overview of the Self-Study's themes and any key takeaways.

Department Overview and Governance:

- A brief overview of the history of the Department, noting any major recent changes since the last review. The Department should feel free to leverage the prior review materials, if available, to help support this historical narrative. This section should not be overly lengthy.
- The current organization of Faculty in the Department, referencing the current faculty headcount, and any future hiring plans/strategy, as well as any comments on trends in faculty count/hiring since the last review. Note any unique ways that faculty are organized among sub-groups/research disciplines.
- Note any impending retirements and how this will impact the Department.
- Describe the Department's current approach to Governance, i.e., how decision-making operates through committees, current policies, etc.
- Describe what faculty service looks like across the Department and how service assignments are determined.
- Note any reflections on the strengths and opportunity areas of the current governance model, and how the current approach supports the Department's mission/goals.
- Describe the current staff/administrative structure in the Department, and how faculty and staff work together to support the Department's operations. Note any strengths and/or challenges of the current staffing model.

Brief Overview of Educational Programs:

- (As relevant) The undergraduate education programs in the department, with a high-level overview of the curriculum, how the assessment of articulated program learning outcomes shapes the curriculum, and intended learning outcomes for undergraduate education, broadly, within the department. Note any strengths and opportunity areas of the current approach to undergraduate teaching and learning. Reference any [Assessment Gallery](#) reports that document the program's efforts to directly assess student learning (if previously submitted by the unit). Leverage the Data Profile to comment on undergraduate student course evaluations and survey results, as well as any reflections on student learning or career outcomes. Flag any anticipated changes to curriculum in coming years.
- (As relevant) The graduate education programs in the department, with a high-level overview of the curriculum, how the assessment of articulated program learning outcomes shapes the curriculum, and intended learning outcomes for graduate

education, broadly, within the department. Note any strengths and opportunity areas of the current approach to graduate teaching and learning. Reference any [Assessment Gallery](#) reports that document the program's efforts to directly assess student learning (if previously submitted by the unit). Leverage the Data Profile to comment on graduate student course evaluations and survey results, as well as any reflections on student learning or career outcomes. Flag any anticipated changes to curriculum in coming years.

Research Priorities:

- The current scope of research in the Department, noting which areas the Department has strength in, and why. Note how faculty are organized across these research areas.
- Comment on the greatest opportunities and challenges of the various research priority areas, and any impending changes to the discipline more broadly.
- Any key differentiators with respect to peers.
- Any new/emerging disciplines the Department is exploring.
- Any gaps in the Department's current research footprint, and how the Department plans to address those gaps, if applicable.
- The various research centers/institutes within the Department's scope, and their key focus areas.

Collaborations:

- How the Department collaborates internally across Northwestern, noting which departments they collaborate with most frequently
- Note any new partnerships the Department hopes to develop further.
- How the Department collaborates outside of Northwestern, more broadly across the field (i.e., with faculty at other universities, associations/organizations in the field, government/research agencies, community organizations, etc.).

In-Depth Key Issues Analysis + Key Issues from last Program Review:

- A thorough, in-depth analysis of each of the current Key Issues determined as a priority for the current Academic Program Review; this section should be the focus of the Self-Study.
- A strong analysis will leverage data provided by the Office of the Provost (e.g., Faculty Survey results, Data Profile) as well as feedback from the Provost, Dean, and Faculty Advisory Council.
- Here, the Department should also share their own ideas/plans to address the Key Issues and move the Department forward.
- As is useful/relevant, briefly address the Key Issues from the last Program Review and the action steps taken as a response; note any ongoing issues from the last review.

Notes on preparation of Self-Study: In this section, the Department should cover the process used to complete the Self-Study, including a list of who was responsible for the contents and how faculty were engaged to provide feedback on the Key Issues and Self-Study.

Appendices: The Department is welcome to provide supplemental appendices that support the review materials. Examples include an organizational chart, a strategic plan, job descriptions, communication and marketing materials, in-depth descriptions of research centers or major grants, etc. Please note, only critical materials should be provided in the Appendices section.